

REMARKS

The application has been amended as needed so as to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

In the course of this revision, subject headings have been inserted at the appropriate locations throughout the specification in a manner consistent with the preferred guidelines set forth at 37 CFR 1.77 and Section 601 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP).

The Official Action had objected to the drawings, as they included the reference "fig. 4", which did not appear in the specification. By the present amendment, it will be seen that the specification has been amended, so as to reflect Figure 4 on page 4, line 16 of the specification. Accordingly, it is believed that the objection to the drawings has been overcome and should not be repeated.

Claims 1-23 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness. The Primary Examiner's well-taken formal criticisms of these claims were borne in mind as points to be corrected when drafting the new claims. Specifically, new claims 24-45 were drafted in such a manner as to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded by applicants as their invention. When drafting the new claims, great care was taken to ensure that the terms recited therein

possessed proper antecedent basis. Moreover, the use of vague, indefinite, or otherwise objectionable expressions was avoided. Thus, new claims 24-45 are believed to set out and circumscribe a particular draining unit, with a reasonable degree of precision and particularity, when read in light of the teachings of the original specification. It is respectfully submitted that a person having ordinary skill in the art would be reasonably apprised of the metes and bounds of new claims 24-45. Accordingly, it is believed that the rejection of the claims under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, has been overcome and should not be repeated.

Claims 1, 4, 13 and 23 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by DIOTALEVI 6,247,397.

Reconsideration of the above rejection is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

The Primary Examiner had kindly indicated that claims 2, 3, 5-12 and 14-22 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, and so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By the present amendment, it will be seen that the same has been effected. Specifically, newly presented independent claim 24 includes the allowable subject matter formerly recited in claims 1 and 5, thereby obviating and rendering moot the above-noted anticipatory rejection. Since claims 25-45 depend

directly or indirectly from an otherwise allowable independent claim 24, they are likewise believed to be patentable by virtue of this dependency.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, therefore, it is believed that this application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance on the basis of new claims 24-45 are accordingly earnestly solicited.

In the event that there are any questions relating to this amendment or to the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney concerning such questions so that the prosecution of this application may be expedited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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